

Appln No. 10/795,896
Amdt date October 2, 2006
Reply to Office action of May 3, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A neck brace, comprising:
a brace body that is preformed to conform closely to the neck of a user comprising soft and pliable flexible material, namely, silicon rubber or other soft and pliable plastics and rubbers that are formed into a unitary body having a smooth and generally flat inner wall, with at least one tunnel formed therethrough having a first, smaller internal diameter when in an unstretched condition, and capable of being stretched to have a larger internal diameter; and
at least one elongate insert which can be received within the at least one tunnel, wherein the at least one elongate insert can have an outer diameter that can be smaller or larger than the first, smaller diameter of the at least one tunnel.
2. (Currently amended) The neck brace of claim 1, wherein the brace body has two side edged edges and a top and bottom edge, and further comprising two engaging members that are affixable attachable together in the vicinity of the side edges for use in retaining the neck brace around a wearer's neck.
3. (Original) The neck brace of claim 2, wherein the two engaging members each comprise sections of material with complementary attachment means to permit the two sections of material to be connected together.
4. (Currently amended) The neck brace of claim 2, wherein the two engaging means each comprise sections of material which are directed directly affixed to vicinity of the two sides of the brace body portion.
5. (Original) The neck brace of claim 1, wherein the at least one elongate insert comprises a flexible tube.

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6. (Original) The neck brace of claim 2, wherein the at least one elongate insert comprises a flexible tube.

7. (Original) The neck brace of claim 6, further comprising strings that are passed through the tubes in the tunnels and connected with the engaging members.

8. (Original) The neck brace of claim 7, wherein the strings are sewn to the engaging members.

9. (Currently Amended) The neck brace of claim 7, wherein the engaging members have apertures formed therein, and the strings are threaded through the apertures to adjust [[of]] the spacing of the engaging members from the side edges of the brace body.

10. (Currently Amended) The neck brace of claim 1, wherein the brace body has a plurality of tunnels, two side edges, a bottom edge, and a top edge, and wherein a plurality of elongate inserts are provided that each comprise [[a]] flexible rods or ~~tube~~ tubes, such that when flexible rods or tubes having a larger outer diameter than the first, smaller internal diameter of the tunnels in the brace body are inserted into the tunnels, the tunnels will be stretched, and the distance between the bottom edge and top edge of the brace body will be lengthened.

11. (Original) The neck brace of claim 1, wherein the at least one elongate insert comprises a flexible rod.

12. (Original) The neck brace of claim 1, further comprising a chin cup fixed on the brace body.

13. (Currently amended) A neck brace, comprising:

a brace body that is preformed to conform closely to the neck of a user comprising soft and pliable flexible material, namely, silicon rubber or other soft and pliable plastics and rubbers that are formed into a unitary body having a smooth and generally flat inner wall, with two side edged edges and a top and bottom edge, and with a plurality of tunnels formed therethrough, each tunnel having a first, smaller internal diameter when in an unstretched condition, and each tunnel being capable of being stretched to have a larger internal diameter;

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a plurality of elongate inserts which can be received within the plurality of tunnels, wherein the elongate inserts can have an outer diameter that can be smaller or larger than the first, smaller diameter of the plurality of tunnels; and

two engaging members that are affixable in the vicinity of the side edges for use in retaining the neck brace around a wearer's neck.

14. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, wherein when inserts having a outer diameter larger than the first, smaller internal diameter of the tunnels in the brace body are inserted into the tunnels, the tunnels will be stretched, and the distance between the bottom edge and top edge of the brace body will be lengthened.

15. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, wherein the two engaging members each comprise sections of material with complementary attachment means to permit the two sections of material to be connected together.

16. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, wherein the two engaging means each comprise sections of material which are directed affixed to vicinity of the two sides of the body portion.

17. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, wherein the plurality of elongate inserts comprises a flexible tube.

18. (Original) The neck brace of claim 17, further comprising strings that are passed through the tubes in the tunnels and connected with the engaging members.

19. (Original) The neck brace of claim 18, wherein the strings are sewn to the engaging members.

20. (Currently Amended) The neck brace of claim 18, wherein the engaging members have apertures formed therein, and the strings are threaded through the apertures to adjust [[of]] the spacing of the engaging members from the side edges of the brace body.

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21. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, wherein the at least one elongate insert comprises a flexible rod.

22. (Original) The neck brace of claim 13, further comprising a chin cup fixed on the brace body.

23. (Currently amended) An adjustable neck brace system, comprising:

a brace body that is preformed to conform closely to the neck of a user comprising soft and pliable flexible material, namely, silicon rubber or other soft and pliable plastics and rubbers that are formed into a unitary body having a smooth and generally flat inner wall, with two side edged edges and a top and bottom edge, and with a plurality of tunnels formed therethrough, each tunnel having a first, smaller internal diameter when in an unstretched condition, and each tunnel being capable of being stretched to have a larger internal diameter;

a plurality of elongate inserts of various diameters which can be received within the plurality of tunnels, wherein the elongate inserts can have an outer diameter that can be smaller or larger than the first, smaller diameter of the plurality of tunnels; and

two engaging members that are affixable in the vicinity of the side edges for use in retaining the neck brace around a wearer's neck, wherein by selecting elongate inserts that have an outer diameter that is larger than the first, smaller internal diameter of the brace body in its unstretched condition, the tunnels will be stretched, and the distance between the bottom edge and top edge of the brace body will be lengthened.